

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 5178

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, GR

SUBJECT: NEW CABINET -- THE RESISTANCE AND THE
ESTABLISHMENT AFFIRMED

REF: A. ATHENS 5045, B. ATHENS 5094

1. SUMMARY. IN NAMING EIGHTEEN FULL MINISTERS AND
TWELVE UNDERMINISTERS TO HIS CABINET, KARAMANLIS HAS
HONORED THOSE WHO RESISTED APRIL 21 REGIME. HIS CHOICES,
EVEN THE MORE PROGRESSIVE ONES, HAVE IMPECCABLE CONNECTIONS
WITH THE ELITIST ACADEMIC, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WORLDS
OF ATHENS. KEY PORTFOLIOS ARE HELD BY MEN WHOSE LOYALTIES
ARE REASSURING TO KARAMANLIS AND TO THE COMMANDERS OF
THE ARMED FORCES. END SUMMARY.

2. OUR INITIAL IMPRESSION OF THE NEW CABINET IS THAT
ITS MEMBERS VINDICATE THE OLD GREEK POLITICAL ESTABLISH-
MENT: THOSE WHOM PAPADOPOULOS RAILED AGAINST ARE NOW
BACK IN OFFICIAL GOOD STANDING. KARAMANLIS HAS MADE NO CONCESSIONS
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OF OFFICE TO THE FAR LEFT, NOR TO THE POPULAR "HEROES"

LIKE THE PAAGOULIS BROTHERS, BUT HE HAS HONORED NATIONAL SENTIMENT BY BRINGING TO OFFICE MEN WHOSE VERY NAMES -- MANGAKIS, MYLONAS, PROTOPAPPAS, STRATOS, ALAVANOS -- CONNOTE CONSISTENT, RATIONAL AND ACTIVE OPPOSITION TO THE APRIL 21 REGIME.

3. OF THE THIRTY CABINET OFFICERS THUS FAR NAMED, ELEVEN WERE ARRESTED UNDER PAPADOPOULOS AND IMPRISONED FOR VARYING PERIODS OF TIME. SIX OTHERS WERE FORCED INTO EXILE. FOUR OF THE NEW MINISTERS -- AVEROFF, MINEOS, STRATOS AND APOSKITIS -- WERE IMPRISONED ONLY FOURTEEN MONTHS AGO FOR INVOLVEMENT IN THE MAY 1973 MUTINY. AND ONE-- ALAVANOS -- WAS TORTURED REPORTEDLY BY THE MILITARY POLICE DURING HIS CONFINEMENT. GRANTED THAT THE GREEK RESISTANCE MOVEMENT WAS NEVER VERY WIDELY BASED IN COMPOSITION AND PRODUCED FEW LEGITIMATE HEROES, KARAMANLIS HAS NOMINATED A SOLID PROFILE OF THOSE WHO STOOD FIRM IN OPPOSITION TO THE JUNTA.

4. AT THE SAME TIME, THOSE WHO MIGHT BE MOST INCLINED TO VINDICTIVENESS HAVE BEEN DENIED THE KEY POSITIONS FROM WHICH THEY MIGHT SEEK REVENGE. FORMER SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE PAPASPYROS LET IT BE KNOWN THAT HE WOULD WELCOME A CRACK AT JUSTICE SO THAT HE COULD DEAL WITH THE SYCOPHANTS OF THAT MINISTRY. HE GOT AGRICULTURE INSTEAD. JOHN PESMAZOGLOU DELAYED HIS ACCEPTANCE OF FINANCE, REPORTEDLY NEGOTIATING WITH KARAMANLIS FOR THE INCLUSION OF SOME YOUNGER REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NEW FORCES, AND BEFORE INSTALLED MADE A PASSIONATE APPEAL FOR VINDICATION OF THE STUDENT MARTYRS. IN FINANCE, HOWEVER, HE WILL HAVE LITTLE OCCASION TO PURSUE ACTIVELY HIS SENSE OF RETRIBUTION. CONSTANTINE ALAVANOS, AT 29 THE YOUNGEST CABINET OFFICER, IS A HERO OF THE STUDENT WORLD BUT AS UNDER SECRETARY OF PUBLIC WORKS WOULD SEEM TO BE SAFELY COOPTED FOR ACCOMMODATION.

5. THERE ARE SOME ANOMALIES AMONG THE NEW APPOINTMENTS. PROTOPAPPAS, THE CABINET'S ONLY STAUNCH SOCIALIST, IS THE NEW MINISTER OF INDUSTRY. CHRIS STRATOS, WHO BANKROLLED THE 1973 ABORTIVE NAVY MUTINY, IS THE NEW

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MINISTER OF INTERIOR, A LAST MINUTE SUBSTITUTION FOR GEORGE RALLIS, WHO BECAME MINISTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER. JOHN VARVITSIOLTIS, FORMERLY A VERY POPULAR NATIONAL RADICAL UNION VOTE-GETTER FROM ATHENS SUBURBS, IS UNDER-MINISTER OF INTERIOR. THIS HAS SURPRISED MANY PEOPLE BECAUSE HE IS THE ONLY NEW OFFICIAL WHO EVER CONSULTED WITH PAPADOPOULOS. ALTHOUGH SOME CONSIDER HIM A "COLLABORATIONIST", HE WAS HIMSELF IMPRISONED

AND WENT LATER INTO EXILE BEFORE HIS PERIOD OF
ATTEMPTED ACCOMMODATION WITH THE JUNTA.

6. THE CABINET'S MAKE-UP SUGGESTS THAT FAMILY TIES
AND RESPECTABLE CONNECTIONS STILL HELP IN OBTAINING
APPOINTMENT. THE CABINET INCLUDED FOUR MEMBERS OF
THE NATIONAL ACADEMY -- ZOLOTOS, K. TSATSOS, LOUROS AND
A. KANELLOPOULOS -- AND A TOTAL OF SIX HAVE BEEN
CONNECTED WITH ATHENS UNIVERSITY AS PROFESSORS. THERE
ARE SEVERAL REASONS THAT COULD BE ADVANCED FOR THE
INCLUSION OF ATHANASSIOS TSALDARIS IN THE CABINET BUT
NONE MORE COMPELLING THAN HIS FAMILY NAME. DEMETRIOS
TSATSOS IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE POLITICAL NEW
FORCES. LIKE ALAVANOS HE DEFENDED THE STUDENTS AND WITH
MANGAKIS WAS ACTIVE IN THE DEMOCRATIC DEFENSE. HE
IS ALSO NEPHEW TO THE MINISTER OF CULTURE AND
IN HIS WAY REPRESENTS THE OLD ESTABLISHMENT LIKE ALL
OTHER OFFICIALS.

7. KARAMANLIS HAS CHOSEN SOME MINISTERS WHO BY ALL
ACCOUNTS ARE BRILLIANTLY SUITED TO THEIR DUTIES --
ZOLOTAS FOR EXAMPLE. HE HAS CHOSEN OTHERS - RETIRED
ADMIRAL MINEOS, FOR EXAMPLE, WHO IS POPULARLY CONSIDERED
INCAPABLE OF DETERMINING STARBOARD FROM PORT, TO BE
MINISTER OF MERCHANT MARINE -- NOT FOR SPECIAL COMPETENCY
BUT BECAUSE THEIR NAMES CONVEY HONOR, DUTY AND RESPECT
FOR CIVIL AUTHORITY. WHETHER IT IS HIS INTENTION OR
NOT, THROUGH NAMING CENTER UNION EX-DEPUTIES LIKE
APOSKITIS, KARAMANLIS HAS MADE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR
ANDREAS PAPANDREOU TO RALLY COMPONENTS OF THE CU
TO HIS PERSONALPOLITICAL BANNER. WITH THE EXCEPTION
OF ZOLOTAS, LOUROS AND LASKARIS, THE CABINET PERSONALITIES
HAVE A COMPELLING POLITICAL AURA, INEVITABLY GIVING
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RISE TO SPECULATION ABOUT THEIR FUTURE
AMBITIONS AND ALLIANCES. AT THIS EARLY POINT IT
REMAINS UNCERTAIN WHETHER THE CABINET OVERALL WILL
HAVE MUCH RESPONSIBILITY OR POWER; MANY INDIVIDUAL
MINISTERS MAY HAVE REDUCED AUTHORITY PENDING THE
ELECTION OF A PARLIAMENT WHICH WOULD SET POLICY
GOALS FOR THEIR SECTORS. THOSE MINISTRIES WHICH
BY THE NATURE OF EVENTS MUST OPERATE FULLY -- INTERIOR,
DEFENSE, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PUBLIC ORDER, COORDINATION --
ARE IN THE HANDS OF PATRIOTS AND PROVEN LEADERS.
UNDER SEPARATE AIRGRAM, THE EMBASSY IS REPORTING
BIOGRAPHIC DETAILS ON THOSE NEW MINISTERS FOR WHOM
ADDRESSEES MAY NOT HAVE ADEQUATE DATA.
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